A year has passed since CCI implemented two important changes—(1) the conversion from “pencil-and-paper” testing to computer-based testing and (2) the transition of CCI’s day-to-day operations to a different management firm. The response from our current and newly credentialed Registrants has been overwhelmingly positive and deeply gratifying. Nevertheless, our Board of Trustees recognizes that CCI has the opportunity – and the obligation – to continue innovating the organization to better serve the cardiovascular patient, the general public, and its Registrants. Over the next couple of years, CCI will be focusing its efforts in three primary areas of improvement: (1) better communication with its Registrants, (2) additional recognition of CCI’s credentials, and (3) increased number of individuals who maintain the status of their credential(s) as “Active.”

Since March 2003, CCI has improved its external communications by publishing The Pulse on a consistent basis and redesigning its website (www.cci-online.org). In addition, CCI credentials now are recognized in more states that tie Medicare reimbursement (for Echo and Vascular studies) to individuals’ credentialing. Still, improvement in these areas is needed. For instance, it is apparent that a number of employers could benefit from targeted educational efforts about CCI’s credentials—namely, the specific application or “appropriateness” of CCI’s credentials to cardiovascular technology.

Another area of improvement involves a specific group of cardiovascular professionals—individuals who have earned a CCI credential, but for whatever reason have not maintained their credential’s “Active” status. The National Office staff already has received numerous inquiries from individuals who want to “reactivate” their credential. In addition, CCI is attempting to contact its “inactive” Registrants (specifically, RCS, RVS, RCIS and CCT) to assist them with reactivating their credential(s). By the end of the 2004 calendar year, we hope to have assisted as many of these individuals as is possible. You may wonder why CCI is interested in reaching out to its “inactive” Registrants. Namely, two reasons are compelling us: (1) increasingly, Medicare contractors are tying credentials or lab accreditation in the non-invasive fields to reimbursement and (2) there’s strength in numbers!

CCI wants to hear from you! Please take the time to fill out the questionnaire within this booklet. By doing so you will assist our Board of Trustees and management staff in making any changes that you, the registrant, feel would benefit the cardiovascular technology profession. (Data from this questionnaire will be shared in the Fall 2004 issue of The Pulse.) In future issues of The Pulse we will include articles from Registrants just like you. This may prompt you to ask “what makes these contributing writers special?” Answer: Only that they have a “story” to tell and they that want to be heard by others. You may think that no one wants to hear about your laboratory’s success stories, or how you believe CCI can better serve its Registrants, but rest assured we all do. If you have something to say, please let us know. You can continue on page 8.
Is Your Co-Worker Credentialed?

By Dennis Carney, RCIS, RCS, FASE
Past President and Chair of Credential Education Committee
Cardiovascular Technology Program, Spokane Community College

Is Your Co-Worker Credentialed? This is a question you need to ask yourself, your employer and your co-worker! Credentialed has become an important factor in today’s field of cardiovascular technology and the old saying, “strength in numbers” is truer today than it has ever been. With health care costs rising and salary ranges dropping, having an active credential is not only a representation of a professional achievement and fundamental knowledge, but also a “requirement” by many employers.

A driving force for this “requirement” status is the number of states, which are now requiring personnel credentialing and/or laboratory accreditation for Medicare reimbursements in the non-invasive cardiovascular fields (Echocardiography and Vascular Ultrasound). While the same can not be true for the invasive cardiovascular technology field, a few States have taken a proactive stance with regards to credential recognition. The State of Ohio’s Department of Health lists within its Administrative Codes that the RCIS credential is recognized as an appropriate credential for professionals employed in a cath lab setting (Chapter 3701-71 of the Ohio Department of Health Administrative Codes). While in the State of South Carolina a bill has been recently proposed on the floor of the State Senate that if passed will recognize the RCIS credential as the appropriate credential for CVT professionals in cardiac cath labs. If this bill is passed, South Carolina will be the first state with a law affecting the recognition of the RCIS credential. Currently representatives of the American College of Cardiology (ACC), the Society of Invasive Cardiovascular Professionals (SICP) and CCI are working closely to monitor the progress of this bill.

You may ask the question: “Why should I care if my co-worker is credentialed or if they have allowed their credential to become inactive?” Answer: for the benefit of the profession on an international scale. If we as cardiovascular technologists want to receive the same recognition as allied health professionals in fields such as Radiologic Technology and Nursing, then we must first demand ourselves and our colleagues become professionally certified, before we can ask others to recognize our field at the level which it should be recognized.

CCI is working closely with Cardiovascular Technology (CVT) educational programs, professional societies, accreditation agencies and other credentialing bodies to ensure that the CVT profession is strengthened through cooperation, not competition. The organizations, which merged to form CCI, began credentialing CVT professionals before there was a profession. We have seen many changes since these early beginnings, including the introduction of strong educational organization driven by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS), and the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). With new educational programs becoming accredited every day, our profession has seen an increase in the number of new professionals entering into the CVT field. These new professionals will be the driving force in the CVT field for years to come. It is our responsibility to insist that each of these new professionals becomes credentialed, as it is our responsibility to make sure our current colleagues are credentialed.

“Strength in numbers!” is a phrase that can be used in numerous settings and a phrase that can help decide the direction of our field. The professionals who hold credentials administered by CCI are a family; we need to maintain the family and build upon it to ensure a brighter future. Get involved, join a professional society, be active in that society’s continuing education programs, and invite a non-credentialed individual to take the next step in their professional career...become credentialed.
Know Your State’s Medicare Reimbursement Policy

The following states or districts have **Vascular Ultrasound** Medicare reimbursement policies or recommendations which are tied to an individual’s credentialing and/or the laboratory’s accreditation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Michigan</th>
<th>Oklahoma</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
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<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
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<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
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<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
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<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
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<td>Illinois</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<td>Iowa</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The following states have **Non-Invasive Echo** Medicare reimbursement policies or recommendations which are tied to an individual’s credentialing and/or the laboratory’s accreditation:

- Louisiana
- Michigan
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- South Carolina
- Wisconsin
Cardiac Cath Lab: Registered Nurses and RCIS

Capital Regional Medical Center is a brand new 180-bed facility that opened its doors in September, 2003. All 180 rooms are private. We are located in the Capital of Florida with the added advantage of having the country close at hand as well as the beautiful gulf coast. The weather is great all year long, outdoor activities abound and the area is the picture of southern charm.

Capital Regional is seeking experienced staff for the all new 5-cath lab suite which includes two Philips combination labs for special and cardiac procedures, two GE INNOVA labs and a new GE EP lab. All personnel will be cross-trained for all areas of the cath lab. We will perform over 1600 procedures this year including peripheral angiography and stenting. The labs are utilized by cardiologists, interventional radiologists and surgeons.

The overall volume of this state-of-the-art program has grown over 25% in the few months since opening. Over 90% of the open heart surgeries are performed off-pump. Endoscopic vein harvesting is being used on a majority of bypass surgeries.

The Heart Center is a product line oriented service that includes two operating rooms dedicated to cardiovascular surgery, a 20-bed critical care unit and a 33-bed progressive care unit. Cardiac rehab is a growing entity and a cardiac and vascular screening center will open in the spring. We are dedicated to the community and strive to provide service where it is needed.

Visit our website to apply online at www.capitalregionalmedicalcenter.com or call our professional recruiter at 850-325-4009 to learn more about the positions and benefits. For immediate consideration, please submit completed applications to:

Human Resources
2626 Capital Medical Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Fax: 850-325-7009
EOE M/F/D/V/DFWD
Credential Recognition Questionnaire

CCI would like to receive information on how your credential has been beneficial to your career as well as how you perceive that your credential has been recognized by your peers and employers. Please fill out the following two (2) page questionnaire and return to the CCI National office. This information is very important and will be used to assist CCI in advocacy campaigns emphasizing the recognition of the credentials we administer. The few minutes you spend completing this form and returning it the CCI National Office will help all new and current Registrants for years to come.

Credential(s) 1.___________________________ 2.____________________________ 3. ________________________________

First Name__________________________________Last Name_________________________________________M.I. _________

City____________________________________________State_______________Country ________________________________

Email Address ______________________________________________________________________________________________

Date Credential(s) Earned: 1.  Month______________________Day_________________Year ____________________________
   2.  Month______________________Day_________________Year ____________________________
   3.  Month______________________Day_________________Year ____________________________

Were you employed before earning your credential? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Years in the field before earning a CCI credential _________________________________________________________________

Did you have another credential or license before earning a CCI credential? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, please circle all that apply:  DO   LPN/LVN   MD   PA   RN   RT   RRT   PA   RDCS   RDMS   RVT   Other _________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Professional Membership (circle all that apply):  AARC   ACCA   ACCP   ACP   ANA   ASE   ASRT   SDMS   SICP   SVU

   Other professional memberships _____________________________________________________________________________

Cardiovascular Specialty Field employed in:  ❑ Echocardiography ❑ Invasive ❑ Vascular ❑ EKG/Arrhythmia/Holter

Years in the field: ❑ 0-2 ❑ 2-5 ❑ 6-10 ❑ 10-15 ❑ 15+

Salary: ❑ $0-30k ❑ $31-40k ❑ $41-50k ❑ $51-60k ❑ $61k+

Number of employees in department: ___________________________________________________________________________

   Number of employees credentialed:______________________  What credential? (#1) ______________________________
   Number of employees credentialed:______________________  What credential? (#2) ______________________________
   Number of employees credentialed:______________________  What credential? (#3) ______________________________

My credential is required by my employer: ❑ Yes ❑ No

   If yes, why is your credential required? ❑ Medicare Reimbursement Policy or ❑ Hospital Regulation or ❑ other...
   If other, please explain:__________________________________________________________________________________

continued on page 6
Please answer the following questions by checking the corresponding box:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My credential was a factor with gaining employment</td>
<td></td>
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<td>My credential has benefited me in career advancement</td>
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<td>My CCI credential is held in the highest regard by my employer</td>
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<tr>
<td>The level of my credential’s recognition is appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCI has kept me informed of industry events in the field of CVT</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCI has kept me informed of the requirements needed to maintain the Active status of my credential</td>
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<tr>
<td>I belong to a professional society which keeps me informed of news in the field of CVT</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend to any colleague that they earn a CCI credential</td>
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</table>

Other Comments:___________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Please return completed questionnaire —

By mail to: CCI • 1500 Sunday Drive, Suite 102 • Raleigh, NC 27607
By fax to: (919) 787-4916

Thank you!
Guidelines for Maintaining Your Active Status

The renewal of your CCI credential is a two-part process—

Part 1: Submission of triennial renewal fees, currently $120 USD

Part 2: Submission of required triennial Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Registry Level Registrants (RCIS, RCS, RVS) must accrue 36 CEUs every triennial cycle, 30 of which must be cardiovascular-related.

Certificate Level Registrants (CCT) must accrue 16 CEUs every triennial cycle.

* If a Registrant re-takes and passes their specialty examination, or another Registry Level Examination, the CEU requirement for that triennial cycle will be waived.

CEUs may be obtained from any of the following CCI-approved CE activities:

- **Category 1** – Continuing Medical Education (CME) Units from Accredited Sponsors of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)
- **Category A** – contact hours from Accredited Providers of Continuing Education in Nursing by the American Nurses Credential Center (ANCC) or one of its Accredited Approvers
- **Category A** – contact hours from organizations that utilize the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) Recognized Continuing Education Evaluation Mechanism (RCEEM)
- Continuing Education Contact Hours from California Board of Registered Nursing (BRN)-approved Continuing Education Providers (CEPs)

Professional societies which offer CEU programs which are approved by at least one of the above pathways:

- American College of Cardiology (ACC), state medical boards, and many other medical specialty colleges
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
- American Academy of Medical Administrators (AAMA)
- American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP)
- Alliance of Cardiovascular Professionals (ACVP)
- American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM)
- American Society of Echocardiography (ASE)
- American Society of Radiologic Technology (ASRT)
- Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (SDMS)
- Society of Invasive Cardiovascular Professionals (SICP)
- Society of Vascular Ultrasound (SVU)

CEU Certificates

Beginning in May of 2004, CCI Registrants may submit CEU certificates for a new online CEU tracking system.

Beginning with Registrants whose credential’s active status expires on December 31, 2004, submission of CEU certificates will be mandatory.

Go to www.cci-online.org for details.

All CEU Certificates (see sample) must contain the following information:

1. The Registrant’s name
2. The date of the Continuing Education Program
3. The name of the Continuing Education Program
4. The name of the Continuing Education Program Sponsor
5. The number of CEUs or CMEs awarded
6. Who approved the CEUs

---

Certificate of Attendance

The American Society of Echocardiography certifies that

<First Name> <Last Name>

has participated in the educational activity entitled


The activity was designated for 31.0 AMA PRA category 1 credits.

Number of hours attended: <Hours>

Mary Alice Dilday
Associate Executive Director

1500 Sunday Drive • Suite 102 • Raleigh, NC 27607
From the President

write an article and submit it to our Executive Director, Aaron White, at director@cci-online.org. Not sure how to “finish” an article you have started? No problem, send us what you have and we will work with you to get the message or story out of your head and onto paper.

CCI can only be as strong as you help us to be. Get involved with your professional society—the knowledge you will gain from interacting with other professionals from around the world is a value that cannot be quantified.

It has been my pleasure serving as President of the CCI Board of Trustees over the past year. With one more year to serve as the CCI Board of Trustees President, I am pleased to have seen firsthand how the changes implemented 12 months ago have been fundamental in where CCI is today. Rest assured that we will not stop here! This cardiovascular field is important to us, the credentials we have administered for over 30 years are important to us, and most of all... you are important to us!